



State of California

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April 5, 2011

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Executive Director

The Honorable Lois Wolk
Member, California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5114
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 571

Dear Senator Wolk:


The Little Hoover Commission supports SB 571, the measure you have authored to expand the role of the California Water Commission to develop a master plan for financing and developing water resources, including a prioritized list of projects and programs. The measure also states the legislative intent that the Commission be given the authority to allocate specific state funds for water resources.

The Commission supports this measure based on findings and recommendations in its report, *Managing for Change: Modernizing California's Water Governance* (August 2010), and in its report, *Bond Spending: Expanding and Enhancing Oversight* (June 2009). In these reports the Commission found that California relies heavily on bond funds for its water resources projects and programs and uses bond money to pay for ongoing water management and planning activities. The Commission also found that the state lacks a strategy for its water resources investments and does not prioritize water projects and programs in awarding bond-funded grants.

The Commission recommended that the California Water Commission provide oversight of all natural resources bond expenditures. The Commission should develop an overarching plan for funding state natural resources programs and address cross-cutting issues within the bond-funded programs to ensure all government entities work in concert and not at cross purposes. The Commission should be given the authority to award bond-funded grants and loans based on a prioritized list of proposed projects and programs that improve water supply, water quality, water conservation, water use efficiency and integrated regional water management planning and implementation.

As the bill moves through the committee process, I will be writing letters on behalf of the Commission to legislators urging aye votes. If you feel my presence and testimony at a hearing would be helpful, please let me know, and I will make every attempt to be available.

Sincerely,


Stuart Drown
Executive Director

c: Commissioners, Little Hoover Commission